COVID-19 Fact Sheet
What to know before, during, and after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine

Now that Ohioans age 5 and older are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, preparation is key. Getting vaccinated can help protect you from serious cases of COVID-19 resulting in hospitalization or death. Here is how to plan for vaccination, what to expect during your vaccination appointment, and what to expect after vaccination.

Before you get a COVID-19 vaccine
If you choose to receive the vaccine, there are several things you will need to do to prepare.

- **Vaccinate with confidence.** Talk to your doctor about the benefits of getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Do your vaccine research using trusted sources, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), your healthcare provider, local health department or the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) to find answers to your questions.
  - The COVID-19 vaccines (Pfizer-BioNTech/Comirnaty, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson) are all **safe and highly effective** at preventing serious COVID-19 illness, hospitalization, and death.
  - The Pfizer vaccine is the first of the COVID-19 vaccines to receive full FDA approval/licensing under the brand name Comirnaty for ages 16 and older after rigorous review. The adult/adolescent formulation of the vaccine remains available for youth ages 12-15 under the FDA emergency use authorization, as well as for additional and booster doses for those eligible. The full FDA license was issued for ages 16 and older first, because that group has been using the vaccine for the longest period of time and therefore has been studied for a longer period of time.
  - COVID-19 vaccines are now available for children as young as 5 years of age. While children are less likely than adults to get severely ill from COVID-19, they are not invincible. Children most certainly can, and do, become ill. Just like adults, when children become sick from COVID-19, they can spread it to others and suffer severe health outcomes, or even death. Pfizer now offers a pediatric vaccine at a lower dosage for children ages 5-11. Children ages 12-17 can receive the standard adult/adolescent formulation Pfizer vaccine.
  - Ohioans should choose to be vaccinated regardless of whether they already had COVID-19.
  - COVID-19 is still a serious threat to people who are unvaccinated. Some people who get COVID-19 can become severely ill, which could result in hospitalization, and some people have ongoing health problems several weeks after getting infected, or even longer. Even people who did not have symptoms when they were infected can have these ongoing health problems.
  - Side effects from the COVID-19 vaccines are mild, and are normal signs that your body is building protection. Severe reactions after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine are rare.
  - Layered prevention strategies – including vaccination when eligible, wearing face masks indoors in public in areas of high community spread, physical distancing, and frequent hand-washing – offer the best overall protection.
  - It can take up to five to six weeks to become fully vaccinated and gain full protection.

- **Make sure the vaccine is safe for your medical conditions or history.** Do you have any past history of vaccine allergies? Are you allergic to any ingredients in the COVID-19 vaccines or polysorbate? These are all things you should discuss with your healthcare provider before making an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccine. If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, you can safely receive the vaccine. Pregnant women, and those who were recently pregnant, are more susceptible to severe outcomes from COVID-19. This means that if they get COVID-19, pregnant women are more likely to end up in the hospital, in the ICU, on a ventilator. Women who are pregnant or plan to become pregnant are encouraged to discuss any questions with healthcare providers first.

- **COVID-19 vaccines can safely be administered along with other vaccines**, including flu or other childhood immunizations.

- **Determine if you are eligible to receive the vaccine, and find a provider near you.** Visit **gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov** to determine eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccine, find a provider near you offering the vaccine product of your choice, schedule

vaccine appointments, and receive updates and reminders.

- o **Schedule your appointment or walk in.** Eligible Ohioans have many opportunities to receive vaccine, whether that is an initial dose, an additional dose for the immunocompromised, or a booster dose. Vaccine providers include pharmacies, community health centers, physician and pediatric offices, community vaccination sites, hospitals, local health departments, and special clinics through schools, businesses or organizations. Visit **gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov** or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH to schedule your appointment. Many providers will also accept walk-ins. Check with your vaccine provider to determine what you will need to bring to your appointment. If you need assistance, including an interpreter, please contact the vaccine provider to see what assistance is available.

- o **Schedule an appointment for your child or teen.** Children ages 5 and older are now eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine, which is the only COVID-19 vaccine currently authorized for people ages 5-17. Currently, no COVID-19 vaccines have been authorized for use in children under the age of 5. Pfizer is the only COVID-19 vaccine currently authorized for use for people younger than 18. Children ages 5-11 will receive a lower-dose, pediatric version of the vaccine. All people younger than 18, unless emancipated, must have consent from and be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian to receive the vaccine. When scheduling using gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov, a parent or legal guardian will be asked to provide consent digitally. If you plan to schedule an appointment on behalf of a child younger than 7 at a pharmacy, you are encouraged check with them regarding the minimum age for vaccination at their location. State law allows those ages 7 years and older to receive a COVID-19 vaccine at a pharmacy. Pharmacists in Ohio may vaccinate children younger than age 7 years if the pharmacist has met certain federal requirements.

When you get vaccinated

- **Before your appointment.** Eat and drink plenty of water before getting a vaccination. This is especially important for adolescents ages 11-18 because fainting after any vaccine is most common among this age group, according to the CDC. Get plenty of rest the night before your appointment if possible. Wear a short-sleeve or sleeveless shirt to allow easy access to the upper arm. If it's a colder day, layer with a cardigan or jacket that is easy to remove quickly.

- **Protect yourself when you are going to your appointment.** Wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth and stay 6 feet away from others while inside, in line, or elsewhere.

- **If you have COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms or think you might have been exposed to COVID-19,** notify the healthcare provider before your visit and follow instructions. You may need to reschedule after your isolation or quarantine days are over.

- **Bring identification with you:** The vaccine provider will need identification to verify your identity, name, and age. You do not need to show proof of citizenship or residency status. Your identification will still be accepted if it is expired or from another state or country. You may need additional documentation to show that you are eligible to receive your vaccine (employee ID, paystub, etc.). Check with your provider to confirm what documentation you need for your appointment. Some acceptable forms of identification are listed below:

  - o Driver's license or any photo ID, regardless of expiration date or place of origin.
  - o Active/retired military ID.
  - o Physician statement (including shot records).
  - o Census records.
  - o Adoption records.
  - o Naturalization certificate.
  - o Birth certificate: Birth record, either original or certified copy.
  - o Consulate ID or matricula consular.
  - o Passport or a passport card.
  - o Certificate of citizenship.
  - o Permanent resident card.

  - o Application for replacement naturalization/citizenship document.
  - o Department of State forms.
    - Military service records (DD-214)
    - Certification of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States (FS-545)
    - Certification of Report of Birth Abroad of a United States Citizen (DS-1350)
    - Consular Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States of America (FS-240)
    - Employment Authorization Document (I-766/EAD)
    - Transportation letter (I-797F)

- **Consent needed for minors:** Parent or legal guardian consent is required to receive any vaccine, unless the minor is emancipated. A parent/legal guardian must accompany the teen to the appointment to provide that consent.

- **What to tell your vaccine provider before you are given the vaccine:** You will be asked a series of questions about allergies and other health conditions to determine any risk factors or conditions you may want to discuss further. Share your history of

allergies, if you have a bleeding disorder or are on a blood thinner, if you are immunocompromised or on a medicine that affects your immune system, if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, if you are breastfeeding, if you have received another COVID-19 vaccine, or if you have received any vaccine in the previous 14 days. This doesn't mean you cannot get the vaccine, but it is recommended you share this information with your healthcare provider beforehand.

- **Injection location:** The COVID-19 vaccine will be administered by an injection into the deltoid muscle of the upper arm. The shot will be given about three finger widths down from your shoulder into the muscle. If you are receiving more than one vaccine during this visit, you may receive injections in different locations.

- **If you're feeling anxious:** Breathe slowly and deeply before you receive the injection, and think about something relaxing. Avoid looking at the syringe, and relax the arm where you will receive the injection. Parents can calm their children's anxieties by reminding them to breathe deeply or distract them by talking to them while they are getting the vaccination.

- **No payment required.** There will be no out-of-pocket costs for vaccine recipients. However, if you have health insurance, you should be prepared to provide that information to the vaccine provider.

- **After your vaccination, you will be monitored for reactions.** All people who receive a COVID-19 vaccine will be monitored on site for a minimum of 15 minutes for any possible allergic reactions. People who have had severe allergic reactions in the past or who have had any type of immediate allergic reaction to a vaccine or injectable therapy will be monitored for at least 30 minutes after getting the vaccine.

- **Keep your vaccine card and fact sheet.** You should receive a vaccination card or printout that tells you which COVID-19 vaccine you received, the date you received it, and where you received it. Keep this card in a safe place, and bring it with you when you return for your future doses. Don't laminate your card so it can be updated in the future. We recommend you take a picture of it to store on your phone for backup. You should receive a fact sheet that tells you more about the specific COVID-19 vaccine you received. The FDA website also includes these resources in multiple languages.
  - If you lose your vaccine card, first contact your original vaccine provider to see if those vaccination records can be located. If the original vaccine provider is unable to assist, contact your local health department. The final available option is to review this information on how to mail a request for your vaccination records to the Ohio Department of Health. Replacement vaccine cards are not available from the Ohio Department of Health. If you do not have the original vaccine card, you can still get vaccine doses.

After you get vaccinated

- **Mild side effects are common.** Many people who have received the vaccine have reported mild side effects. The most common side effects associated with COVID-19 vaccines are similar to side effects experienced with most vaccines, such as redness, pain or swelling at the site of the injection, muscle or joint pain, fever, chills, tiredness, and headache. These side effects may feel like flu and may even affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. **These are normal signs your body is building immunity.**

  - **Fainting after getting a shot**: Fainting after any vaccine is more common among adolescents than adults, and is most often associated with the anxiety of receiving a vaccination, according to the CDC. Sitting or lying down when getting a shot and then for about 15 minutes after the shot, can help prevent fainting. If you or your child is feeling weak, dizzy, lightheaded, or sweaty after vaccination during observation, alert staff on site and lie down for several minutes.
  - **Treat side effects.** If you have pain or discomfort, talk to your doctor about taking an over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen. To reduce pain and discomfort at the injection site, apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area. Be sure to move and exercise your arm. To reduce discomfort from fever, drink plenty of fluids and dress lightly.

  - **When to call the doctor or seek emergency care:**
    - If your side effects don't go away after a few days or intensify, contact your healthcare provider. Some vaccine side effects are similar to symptoms of COVID-19.
    - Following the observation and after you have left the vaccination site, if you think you might be having a mild allergic reaction, including itching or swelling, report the symptoms to your vaccine provider.
    - Serious adverse events after COVID-19 vaccination are rare but may occur.
      - After receiving the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine, there is risk for a rare but serious adverse event — blood clots with low platelets (thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome, or TTS). Women younger than 50 years old should especially be aware of their increased risk for this rare adverse event.
      - Cases of myocarditis and pericarditis in adolescents and young adults have been reported more often after getting the second dose than after the first dose of one of the two mRNA COVID-19 vaccines,

Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna. The risks for these conditions are higher through COVID-19 infection than COVID-19 vaccination.

- **Severe allergic reactions,** such as anaphylaxis, are rare. An allergic reaction is considered severe when it requires treatment with epinephrine or leads to hospitalization. The CDC has learned of a small number of people who have experienced these adverse events after getting a COVID-19 vaccine and will continue to monitor the safety of the vaccines.
  - **If you think you are having a severe allergic reaction after leaving the vaccination site and are showing signs of anaphylaxis, including respiratory distress, dizziness, fainting, fast heart rate, hives or swelling of lips, face or throat, seek emergency medical care immediately.**
- **Report side effects/reactions:** The CDC and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) encourage vaccine recipients or providers to report possible reactions (or adverse events) to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). The CDC also offers a smartphone-based tool for vaccine recipients called v-safe. Those who enroll will receive personalized health check-ins using text messages and web surveys. The tool also allows recipients to share with the CDC any side effects they experience after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. V-safe also offers second-dose reminders.

- **Schedule your second-dose appointment.** The Pfizer vaccine and the Moderna vaccine require two doses. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine requires one dose. Ohioans who receive a two-dose product must receive a second dose of the vaccine from the same manufacturer because they are not interchangeable.
  - If you receive the Pfizer vaccine, the second dose is due 21 days after the first dose.
  - If you receive the Moderna vaccine, the second dose is due 28 days after the first dose.
  - Individuals should not be scheduled to receive the second dose earlier than recommended. However, second doses administered within the grace period are still considered valid. Doses inadvertently administered earlier than the grace period should not be repeated. However, if it is not feasible to adhere to the recommended interval, the second doses of the COVID-19 vaccines may be scheduled for administration up to six weeks (42 days) after the first dose. If the second dose is administered beyond these intervals, there is no need to restart the series.

- **Immunity is not immediate.** It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. An individual is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after the last dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, meaning it can take up to six weeks to reach full immunity.

- **When prevention measures should continue:** The vaccines are safe and effective at preventing serious outcomes from COVID-19. Most people who get COVID-19 are unvaccinated; however, since vaccines are not 100% effective at preventing infection, some people who are fully vaccinated can still get COVID-19. An infection of a fully vaccinated person is referred to as a "breakthrough infection." People who get vaccine breakthrough infections can be contagious but are less likely than unvaccinated people to be hospitalized or die. To reduce the risk, the CDC recommends that fully vaccinated people:
  - Wear a mask indoors in public if they are in an area of substantial or high transmission.
  - Fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a face mask if they or someone in their household is immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease, or if someone in their household is unvaccinated.
  - Consider a booster dose when eligible to ensure optimal, ongoing protection. Millions of Americans ages 18 and older are now eligible for booster shots.
    - Booster shots are recommended for everyone 18 and older at least 2 months after receiving a Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.
    - People in the following groups are eligible to receive a booster shot at least 6 months after completion of an mRNA primary series (both doses of either Pfizer or Moderna):
      - 65 years and older.
      - Age 18+ who live in long-term care settings.
      - Age 18+ who have underlying medical conditions.
      - Age 18+ who live or work in high-risk settings.

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For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov. For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the COVID-19 CareLine at 1-800-720-9616.